

CENTRE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

WORK RELEASE ELIGIBILITY

GUIDELINES & CRITERIA

Before pursuing work release, you must understand that work release is a privilege – not a right. If you are attempting to secure work release during your incarceration, it will help you to read the following guidelines;

A.} During your court proceedings, the Judge may state that you are to be “granted work release” or make you “eligible for work release.” This means that you are eligible to be *considered* for work release — **it does not mean that you have been approved for work release.** The approval process is thorough and lengthy and involves three separate agencies reviewing your proposed work release plan (the Prison, the Probation Dept., and the Judge).

When reviewing your application we will take into consideration; the severity of current and past offenses, the length and severity of criminal history, successes and failures on parole supervision, untreated addiction and mental health issues, as well as current and past behavior while incarcerated. If all three reviewing agencies agree to your proposed plan, the Judge will then sign an Approval Order that will be sent to the prison authorizing work release.

B.} Be aware that the Prison, the Probation Dept. and the Judge may make treatment recommendations for you. It is in your best interest to participate in any recommended programming as work release can and will be denied for reasons of non-compliance. Your employer must be willing to accommodate any schedule conflicts that may arise from suggested programming.

C.} If you are attempting to secure pre-approval of work release prior to incarceration, you will still be compelled to undergo medical exams and classification interviews upon commitment. You will be unable to begin work until these screenings are completed (typically a minimum of 48hrs). In the course of these screenings, it is possible that problem areas will be identified. These areas may need to be addressed prior to the commencement of work release.

D.} If you are not currently employed, or do not have an employer that is holding a job opening for you, it is recommended that you enroll in Job Skills Class immediately. Job Skills Class is a requirement to be considered eligible for a Work Search Furlough or Job Placement. Exemptions to this requirement are only considered for those that display a solid professional or academic history, and all requests for exemption should be discussed with counselors or the work release coordinator.

Below is a list of criteria that you and your job must meet prior to any attempt to obtain work release.

1.] Inmates convicted of any sex offence, sex related offences involving minors, either currently or in the past, *will not* be considered for work release.

2.] Inmates convicted of serious violent acts against another person, either currently or in the past, where the victim remains in Centre County or surrounding areas, and where the victim expresses concern for their own safety *will not* be considered for work release.

3.] Inmates that have been convicted of escape or fleeing & eluding, either currently or in the past, *will not* be considered for work release. Inmates that

have a history of absconding from parole will be scrutinized closely and *may be* deemed ineligible.

4.] Inmates that display contempt for the Court by engaging in violations of a Protection from Abuse Order or a “no contact” provision ordered by the court, either currently or in the past, will be scrutinized closely and *may be* deemed ineligible.

5.] Inmates *must* work within the confines of Centre County. If an inmate is too far away, our ability to actively supervise them is compromised and **employment will not be permitted**. Exceptions to this rule will be considered only if the inmate works within close proximity to the county line, is within reasonable driving distance, and is actively supervised by their employer. You should discuss this with the work release coordinator in advance.

6.] Inmates *may not* have pending or open charges, active detainers / warrants, or be pending jail time in any other facility. However, if the inmate has been released by the Centre County Court on unsecured bail or is “released on own recognizance” (ROR) for non-violent or non-sex related offences, work release may be considered.

7.] The following occupations *are not* considered appropriate for work release; “Doorman” or “Bouncer” at a nightclub or bar, “Exotic Dancers”, retail sales of alcoholic beverages, or any position that requires an individual to prepare or dispense alcoholic beverages. These positions are considered to have a high potential for criminal activity. Work release inmates shall not be exposed to this environment while in custody. Exceptions may be made for food servers in establishments with liquor licenses but whose primary purpose is the sale of food items.

8.] Inmates *must* be covered by Workman's Compensation Insurance. Inmates considered independent contactors must provide documentation that they have their own insurance and are actively covered for liability & injury. Have your insurance agent contact the Work Release Coordinator to verify the type of coverage you have and the coverage period.

9.] Inmates *must* work a set schedule that does not change from week to week. Some schedule changes may be accommodated on a case by case basis; however this is to be discussed between the work release coordinator and the employer.

10.] Inmates *must* be paid via standard payroll system and be able to show documentation of regular deductions, gross pay, and net pay (i.e., a pay stub). Jobs that are considered "under the table" *will not* be considered.

****** *See # 12 for information regarding self-employment.*

11.] Individuals *must* submit their paychecks directly to the prison, which will then deduct 15% of the gross pay as a fee for Work Release. If an individual is paid via tips & gratuity, all cash money must be collected by the inmate's direct supervisor and submitted as a separate check or money order along with their base payroll check at pre-determined intervals (typically-normal pay days). Base pay and tips will be added together and the 15% will be deducted from the total.

In addition, the Court will deduct further funds from the inmates pay to be applied toward fines, court costs, and restitution. Residual funds will then be applied to the inmates prison account. There is a system in place that enables a work release inmate to send funds to their families.

12.] Self –employed individuals *must* supply documentation indicating an average monthly income. Based on this documentation a sum will be calculated that is to be paid on a regular basis (weekly, bi-weekly, etc), in lieu of a regular paycheck. If the inmate fails to pay the agreed upon amount, work release will be terminated and a misconduct will be issued.

13.] Inmates *must* have a stable and reliable transportation plan to be considered for work release. Transportation must be well established at the time the application is submitted. Acceptable forms of transportation are as follows; CATA bus system, co-workers/employers, close relatives, and spouse if legally married-- fiancés, girlfriends, boyfriends, neighbors, acquaintances *are not* acceptable.

In some cases an inmate may drive themselves to work if they meet the following conditions;

- I.)** Inmate provides documentation of current valid driver's license, registration, and insurance.
- II.)** Inmate is not pending a license suspension for any reason.
- III.)** Inmate's crime does not involve a victim that fears for their safety, or a victim that the Court / Prison feels may be potentially vulnerable.

14.] Inmates *must* be adequately supervised by their employer at all times. Those that are self-employed, or feel that their jobs require a different type of supervision must discuss their options with the Work Release Coordinator prior to submitting an application.

15.] Infractions of the work release Rules & Regulations, or any outside furlough agreement, which occurred during past incarcerations, *may negatively impact* your eligibility for future work release.

16.] You *will* be drug tested prior to being approved for work release. You *will not* be allowed out of the facility until all drug screens display negative results. If you test positive for illicit substances, we will not retest you for a two week period. In addition, the Court will be notified and additional treatment recommendations may be made that will impact your eligibility for work release. Reporting to the prison under the influence of any substance will negate any pre-approved work release plan.